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Labor & Industry NEWS

Volume VI, Issue 3

Fall 2001

DLI Employee Goes the Extra Mile to Help Those In Need Through MT Rides for America

- **Leslie Woodward**

When news of terrorist attacks on America reached Canada, many wanted to help out. These Alberta folks decided to help their American neighbors in the cowboy way.

September 18th, Calgary's "Alberta Rides for America" horseback riders began a 6-day ride to the Canadian/American border with saddlebags carrying $50,000 in Red Cross pledges. Montana riders from Duck Lake picked up the saddlebags of pledges and "Montana Rides For America" saddled up September 25th.

The goal was to ride the asphalt trail across Montana and deliver the saddlebags to Wyoming riders at the border below Lodgegrass, adding Montana donations along the way. Don Compton, Trail Boss, estimated the ride would take up to 30 days and would cover over 400 miles in the saddle.

Dana (my better half) and I felt the pull to pack our bedrolls and join MRFA as they approached Great Falls. Thanks to understanding managers and annual leave from work (even Dana's hunting leave), we loaded our bedrolls, tack and horseshoeing tools into our 4-horse trailer. This was after we painted the horse trailer to resemble an American flag on each side (with wheels).

We have made some lasting friendships and shared some precious times with saddle pals as well as community members we have met along the way. I found some times I just can't say thank you enough and other times I can't talk past the lump in my throat after times like these:

- Monica & her 2 children delivering sandwiches to us along the highway
- Elementary students singing "This Land Is Your Land" to the riders
- Tom running across 4 lanes of interstate to say "God Bless You All"
- 3 ladies taking flag sweatshirts off their backs to give the cold riders
- A 5th grader saying, "You guys are the coolest cowboys I know"

I found highway riding is a bit different than trail riding. I now know what a horse will and won't do while sandwiched between a guardrail and 18 wheelers honking by at 60 miles an hour. I also learned the depths I will go to stay in the saddle at these times! I developed the fine art of eating a hamburger on my trotting gelding while balanc-

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Montana Rides for America arrives at the Helena Fairgrounds.

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Commissioner's Corner

- **Wendy Keating**

The Department of Labor and Industry has experienced a lot of change this fall! Most notably, Commissioner Mike Foster accepted the post of chief policy advisor for Governor Martz, and yours truly has been named as acting commissioner. Those of you that have worked with me know how much I love a challenge, and this new assignment certainly fits the bill. I've been with the department for over thirty years, so I've had the opportunity to work with many of you, and I'm excited to meet all of you and learn more about the work you do in your divisions.

Many people have asked me how long I'll be the acting commissioner. In all honesty, I don't know yet. This is a temporary assignment, and if I find the job to be fun, satisfying, and challenging, I may have the opportunity to submit my name for consideration for the remainder of Gov. Martz' term. I will not be returning to Workforce Services Division at the end of this assignment, regardless of its duration. Retirement awaits!

My values for the department are closely tied to the vision and mission of the department. Teamwork, continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and employee empowerment are the core values that I believe each one of us should strive to achieve in our work. This requires a commitment from every one of us. I'm counting on you to work with me to see that these values are part of our work every day, in every transaction, with every customer. If we all commit to these core values, I know our department will continue to be a flagship for excellence in state government.

High Fives

On August 24, the Unemployment Insurance Division hosted the national UI Technology Executive Committee and showcased the MISTICS system. Here is some of the feedback from that meeting:

"I enjoyed seeing Montana very much. Your system is truly impressive, and all of you were wonderfully hospitable."
- Jerry Fleming, Connecticut

"Thank you for your wonderful presentations on your MISTICS system. It is a very impressive system — well thought out and user friendly. And I was also very impressed with your staff. Everyone from managers to line workers were professional, articulate, and positive even as we badgered them with questions. Plus, everyone we talked to seemed to like the new system so much. Our committee members were just so impressed with the wonderful system you put in, and you did it in a relatively short period of time."
- Karen Blass, ITSC, Washington, D.C.

Congratulations to Sandy Holtet on her retirement. Sandy worked for the Board of Medical Examiners.

(Continued from page 1)

ing a pop in the saddle.....until my cell phone rang. I loved the phone calls from Jill Isakson and Kelly Chapman – my horse, Hug, had a little trouble with the calls. I'm not sure how my voice mail message from I-90 that I left for Marla Schreder sounded – she didn't laugh when I saw her next!

This once in a lifetime experience is one of the many fine examples of how September 11, 2001 has unified us, strengthened us and renewed our commitment to this great nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Visit www.montanaridesforamerica.com to check out photos and stories from the riders on the trail.

MT Rides for America arrives at the Capitol. Riders averaged $1,100 per day on the trail from Great Falls to Helena, and raised a total of $18,000. On October 22, the Montana riders passed the torch on to Wyoming Rides for America.

State Employee Benefits Change Significantly for 2002

- **Anne Bauer, Employee Benefits Bureau**

For 2002, the State contribution to employee insurance benefits increases by $30/month (10%). Due to rising health care costs, this sizeable employer increase still left a projected revenue shortfall of $3.3 million. Options for meeting this challenge were developed by the State Employee Benefits Bureau in cooperation with Buck Consultants and the State Employee Group Benefits Advisory Council. In early August, these options were presented to state employees and retirees in a quick Internet (and interactive phone) survey to gauge member preference.

RESULTS:

Members were asked whether they preferred to make up the projected shortfall entirely through out-of-pocket premium increases (an average increase of $30/month for dependent coverage) or change benefits to cut costs and the size of the required premium increase. A total of 2,759 members participated in the survey. Of the 2,261 who indicated a preference, 66% favored cost-cutting changes over a $30 premium increase. Of these, 68% preferred the cost-cutting option of increasing vision exam co-pays and 67% favored establishing preferred hospitals, which offer price discounts. Only 26% preferred the third option of entirely eliminating vision exam benefits. Many respondents indicated preferences and suggestions for changes to be considered in future years as costs continue to rise.

HMO Plan Changes for 2002:

HMO Benefits Plans are available from three administrators, depending on where you live:

- Big Sky Health Plan will be available to employees in the Butte area
- Blue Choice Plan administered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield will be available in many towns, including Billings, Miles City, Havre, Great Falls, and most of western Montana, except Bozeman.
- New West Health Services will be available in many towns, including Billings, Miles City, and most of western Montana, except Great Falls and Bozeman.

All HMO plans will have a $15 copay for office visits, and 25% copay for inpatient hospital services.

Traditional and Basic Plan Changes for 2002:
PLAN CHANGES FOR 2002:

Premiums will increase $25/month for health coverage and $5/month for dental coverage-both of which are covered by the $30 increase in State contribution for active employees. Dependent premiums will increase an additional $14.50 on average - varying by Plan and dependent coverage. Medicare retiree increases are somewhat smaller.

Vision Benefit Changes: The Vision Exam co-payment will increase from $10/exam to $20/exam. Adults will still be able to have one exam per two-year benefit period (2002 - 2003), and children will still get one exam every 12 months.

Preferred Hospitals: The State of Montana has joined with other employers through the Montana Association of Health Care Purchasers to contract with hospitals in Montana's seven largest communities for reduced prices. Six hospitals in these communities submitted winning proposals and are preferred hospitals for State indemnity plans (Traditional/Medicare Coordinated and Basic). The remaining hospitals in these seven communities are non-preferred hospitals. Hospitals in several additional communities have also offered discounts that qualify them for preferred status. See below.

TOWN	HOSPITAL	STATUS
Kalispell	Kalispell Regional	Preferred
Missoula	St. Patrick's	Preferred
Community	*Non-preferred**	
Great Falls	Benefis	Preferred
Butte	St. James'	Preferred
Helena	St. Peter's	Preferred
Billings	St. Vincent's	Preferred
Deaconess	*Non-preferred*	
OTHERS		
Whitefish	North Valley	Preferred
Polson	St. Joseph's	Preferred
Ronan	St. Luke's	Preferred
Miles City	Holy Rosary	Preferred

At preferred hospitals, members pay 15% of allowed charges rather than the normal 25% -- an immediate savings. Members may choose to receive care from a Non-Preferred Hospital, but will pay slightly more (30% coinsurance instead of the normal 25%) for non-emergency services. The standard 25% co-insurance applies to all unlisted hospitals and to emergency services at non-preferred hospitals.

To assist members in Missoula who need maternity services, which are not provided at the preferred hospital, maternity services will be reimbursed at the standard 75% (25% co-insurance) at the non-preferred hospital, (Community Hospital).

Well-Child Benefit Changes (for children 0-5): This benefit has been revised to a standard 75% of allowable charges for covered check-ups and immunizations and continues to be exempt from deductible. Covered services received through a county health department will be paid at 100%. You will need to submit a claim to BC/BS for these services.

Prescription Drug Plan Changes: Changes in prescription drug benefits affect all State Employee Benefit Plan members -- regardless of the medical plan they select. Everyone will have the same prescription drug plan.

For more detailed information about benefit plan changes, check out the benefits web page, http://www.discoveringmontana.com/doa/spd/Benefits/index.htm. You can also attend one of the many benefit planning workshops scheduled across the state, or call 1-800-287-8266.

Introducing the Fearless Leaders of the Business Standards Division

Left to right: Bill Jellison, Brenda St. Clair, Jim Brown, Lisa Addington, Jack Kane. Photo by Kelly Chapman.

Jim Brown, Administrator

Jim was born in Nebraska and raised in a small town in South Dakota. He graduated from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City with a B.S. in Civil Engineering and received a M.S. in Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin. Jim has been a licensed Professional Engineer for over 25 years and he has several years of experience as a design/district engineer for a prominent Idaho consulting engineering firm, plus more than 22 years of service to the State of Montana in several capacities. Prior to the transfer to the Department of Labor and Industry, Jim was administrator of the Building Codes Division of the Department of Commerce for 15 years.

Jim is very proud of his two lovely and gainfully employed daughters, Robyn and Kelly, who also reside in Helena. For the last 20 years or so Jim has raised quarter horses that have been successful in reining and barrel racing at the state level and in cutting at the national level. He has raised a National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA) World Champion, an NCHA Futurity Champion and winners of more than $632,000 in the cutting arena. Jim and his two daughters enjoy their annual December trip to Fort Worth, Texas to attend the NCHA Futurity. Jim also enjoys hunting (particularly bird hunting with his Brittany "Bill"), fishing, working around the 'ranch' and generally living the good life in Montana.

Lisa Addington, Bureau Chief, Health Care Licensing Bureau

Lisa Addington is the Bureau Chief of the Health Care Licensing Bureau (HCL Bureau), Business Standards Division (BSD). She grew up in Helena and graduated from Helena Senior High. She and her husband (Gary) have successfully put together a second family consisting of two daughters, one son, one daughter in-law and a grandson. Together they enjoy the great outdoors (and each other's company) whether they are snowmobiling, boating, four-wheeling, camping or just barbecuing in their own backyard.

Lisa has continuously worked in state government since December 1974. She served as the Board Administrator to the Board of Dentistry and Board of Architects. While associated with the boards she served on the National Administrators Board for the American Association of Dental Examiners and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. In 1995, she was promoted to a Professional and Occupational Licensing (POL) Division, Bureau Chief position in the Department of Commerce.

In July of this year, the POL Division became part of Department of Labor and Industry, BSD and she continued as the Bureau Chief for the restructured HCL Bureau. The Bureau provides personnel support to 19 regulatory/licensing boards and one separate regulatory licensing program where no board exists. It is staffed with 23 competent, devoted, and energized employees.

Bill Jellison, Bureau Chief, Building Codes Bureau

Bill is a Montana native, born in Miles City and raised in several railroad communities, including Livingston where he graduated from Park High School. He received a B.S. Degree from Eastern Montana College (now MSU-Billings), is a master plumber by trade, and worked in the plumbing and pipe trades before beginning his career with the State of Montana in January of 1985. He has held several positions in state government, becoming a bureau chief with Building Codes in December of 1997.

Bill lives near Helena, is married with two grown children and enjoys hunting and fishing.

Brenda St. Clair, Bureau Chief, Professional & Occupational Licensing Bureau

Brenda has been employed with the State of Montana for 27 years and has worked exclusively in the area of professional and occupational licensing. She started work when the licensing boards were in the Department of Professional and Occupational Licensing, was subsequently moved to the Department of Commerce in 1980, and now the Department of Labor and Industry. Some of the boards that Brenda was responsible for prior to her current position were the Boards of Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, Optometry, and Public Accountants. She was promoted to an Administrative Officer/ Supervisor in 1994 and then Bureau Chief in 1997. In 1995, Brenda received the Governor's Appreciation Award for Excellence in Performance.

Brenda still considers Chinook her hometown where she was born and raised. She and her husband, Kevin, have two teenage boys, Tad who is 17 and Randy who is 15. Brenda has been extremely involved in the Helena Junior Bowling Association for the last 10 years, recently completing six years as President. The HJBA organizes an overnight bus trip to take the junior bowlers to the state tournament each year, holds all-night bowling parties, and has instituted a program whereby junior bowlers can earn scholarship points for bowling and other activities. Brenda enjoys bowling herself on an adult league and also enjoys boating, fishing, crossword, and jigsaw puzzles.

Jack Kane, Bureau Chief, Weights & Measures

Jack was born and raised in north central Montana and attended school in Havre. He graduated from the College of Great Falls in 1981 with a B.S. in Business Administration (back when the University of Great Falls was still a college). He started with the State of Montana as an inspector with the Bureau of Weights & Measures in 1989, and was promoted to bureau chief in 1994. Prior to coming to work for the state, Jack worked for a testing/consulting firm in the oil & gas industry in Montana, and constructed electrical transmission lines in Montana, Arizona, and Oregon.

Jack has three teenage daughters, several good horses and one fat dog that occupy the balance of his time when he's not working for weights & measures. He also enjoys all types of outdoor activities year round including fishing, hunting, camping, golfing, and skiing.

High Fives

"I am writing to commend Amy Smith on a job well done. I and a number of others were separated from employment in Missoula. During the long and grueling process Amy was a bright light on a dark path. At every turn and with every inquiry, Amy answered our questions, of which there were many. If she did not know the answer she sought out information in a timely fashion and returned our calls. All government departments need an Amy Smith, is all I can say."
— Rebecca Holman

"Thanks so much for your quick response [Amy Smith & John Andrew]. This is precisely what I needed...As a reporter, the state is very responsive."
— Michael Moore, *The Missoulian*

"I am involved in a case in which it was necessary to contact the Department of Labor and Industry to work out some of the details I encountered. The person I contacted at the department was Amy Smith. Amy is considerate, very knowledgeable, prompt in her responses, and always courteous and pleasant.

Too often it is easy to complain when someone does not do a good job. I wish to congratulate state government, the department and, in particular, Amy for being such an outstanding representative of state government."
— John P. Paul, Attorney

The Department of Labor and Industry got a big "Hurrah!" from the Secretary of State's office for submitting our second quarter ARM replacement pages with zero errors. Replacement page preparation falls entirely on Sandy Duncan's shoulders and I am endebted to her for her quality and timely work, her attention to detail, and her always cheerful attitude. The department is very fortunate to have Sandy as one of our long-term employees."
— Mark Cadwallader

"This is just a note [to Tanya McCormack] *to thank you for your fairness, thoroughness, and diligence. Let me simply say that your deliberations give me a new appreciation for the public sector and the State of Montana."*
— Richard Dunn

Congratulations to ERD's Lori Williams! She was recently presented with the Award of Merit for Outstanding Contribution and Commitment to the Development of Electronic Data Interchange Standards for Workers' Compensation Reporting at the 87th Annual Convention of the International Association of Industrial Accident boards and Commissions (IAIABC) held in Portland, ME.

The Department of Labor and Industry, Business Standards Division, Montana Board of Realty Regulation and their education director, Mike Meredith, received national recognition for the "Outstanding New Education Program" for 2001 by the Association of Real Estate License Law Officials. Mike Meredith designed the curriculum and developed learning objectives for a post-licensing course for newly licensed realtors. The association presented the award to John Beagle, Board Chair, at their annual meeting in Memphis in October.

"Dear Helena [Lee] - I can't begin to thank you for all the help you have been to me over the years!!! You don't know how your logical, well-informed answers helped me."
— Deb Hepp, Radiologiv Technologists

Information Technology Highlights

Protecting our PCs from the "Sniffles"

• Nan Nail

With the cold and flu season looming on the horizon, don't forget your old pal, the computer, can also become infected with a "virus." We in state government are fortunate that we have platoons of IT specialists whose prime responsibility is maintaining the health and well being of our computer systems. There have been several instances in the last few years of nasty little viruses showing up in our various networks. When we arrive at the office every day, we flip the switch and expect our PCs to boot up and do everything we ask of them. If something interferes with that process we're at a loss to explain why. Often, when the explanation is given, it contains terminology that has as much information for the end user as ancient Sanskrit. We listen dutifully to our IT people as they tell us a virus was found in the system. We then say "Oh, OK" and go back to our daily routine. It brings forth a couple of questions though. The foremost being, "What is a computer virus."

In researching the subject I found that, interestingly enough, there is no widely accepted *definition* of the term "computer virus." What I found was the following loose definition provided by Thomas Jefferson University. "A computer virus is executable code that, when run by someone, *infects* or attaches itself to other executable code in a computer in an effort to reproduce itself." Some computer viruses are malicious, erasing files or locking up systems; others merely present a problem solely through the act of infecting other code.

How do they get into the system? Probably the greatest single source of virus infection is the Internet. Viruses enter the system when information is downloaded from an infected site. If a floppy disc is used to transfer information from an infected system, the virus is downloaded into the new system from the disc. It is for this reason that State Information Technology staff stay aware of the "latest and greatest" in the virus world and make sure all virus scan software is up to date and effective. Most of the time, the rest of us aren't even aware that virus scans are running on information downloaded into our systems.

How do virus scans work? Scanners are software programs that look through code for strings (byte sequences) that match known strings in known viruses, and then remove the virus. Scanning programs can look at specific disks or files when you require it, or it can be set to look at each program about to be executed. State systems have virus scans running constantly so interruption of work due to this problem is minimal in most cases. It is a constant battle since new viruses are being created every day but as new viruses are discovered, scan programs are modified to detect and eliminate them.

DLI Golf Tournament

18-hole Winners: From left to right, Mike Hall, Joe Strelnik, Mikey Clouse, Alvy Chapman, Jack Hardy. These champs all work at the Butte/Anaconda Job Service Workforce Center. Photo by Deb Buxbaum.

9-hole Winners: Gordon Bruce (from Hearings), Jim Wheat, Mark Bowlds, John Lowney (from Workforce Services Division), Lisa Lowney (John's wife). Photo by Deb Buxbaum.

Golfers Charlie Hail (Legal), Jerry Keck (ERD), Mike Foster (former commissioner), and Kevin Braun (Legal) enjoy an afternoon in the sunshine. Photo by Deb Buxbaum.

Changes in Effect for the Office of Personnel and Training

- **Brent Rabe**

Recently the Office of Personnel and Training has undergone several changes. The changes include a new name, a new location and a new structure. Our new name is now consistent with the rest of the personnel world. We will now officially be known as the Office of Human Resources, otherwise referred to as HR.

Our new location is a result of the recent Department of Commerce reorganization. Because of the need for additional equipment, filing space and personnel in the department, it was necessary for DLI to find some additional space. HR's own expansion of additional personnel files, position files and medical files, as well as limited space in our previous location made us a logical choice to move to the new location. Our new spot is on the 3rd floor of the old Livestock Building, right across the street (North) from the Walt Sullivan Building. Our address is 1310 E. Lockey Avenue. Our phone numbers will remain the same.

Finally, we have reorganized our structure within HR. The HR staff is now aligned with each of the divisions in the agency. One of our main goals will be to build stronger relationships between HR and each of the divisions. A structure of this manner will also hopefully aid the HR staff in becoming more engaged with the goals and objectives of the divisions they are representing. This structure will also help in the area of cross training in times of absences or in times of peaks in workload of any given area.

As a result of this reorganization, Barb Malensek will now be the HR representative for the Workforce Services Division (WSD) for any of their HR needs. Adeline Miller will be the HR representative for both the Central Services Division and Unemployment Insurance Division. Our newest HR member, Polly Boyer, will be the HR representative for the Employment Relations Division and the new Business Standards Division. Due to the importance of filling positions quickly, recruitment is the one area there is a need to have one person specialize. Therefore, Kari Christensen will handle all recruitment for each of the divisions except for those in WSD, Barb Malensek will continue to handle those.

I will continue to be involved with the more sensitive HR issues throughout the department. I will also handle any HR needs for the Commissioner's Office, the Office of Legal Services, the Commission on Community Services and the Workers' Compensation Court. I will also continue to develop or update policies for the agency and be involved in any other department wide HR issues.

Although these are quite a lot of changes at one time, I believe they will be positive ones. However, I hope you will remain patient with us as we sort through some of our procedural "bumps in the road" that we undoubtedly will come across. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me.

In Your Corner with Safety: Home Safety Audit

- **John Maloney**

Did you know that over half of worker injuries occur off the job? It's true. So why, then, do we spend most of our safety and health efforts concentrating on the workplace? Workplace safety is extremely important, but we should also carry our efforts through to the home.

Approximately 24,000 individuals are killed each year in home incidents, or about 65 deaths per day. The National Safety Council reports that about 3.6 million people are injured in home incidents. About 100,000 of these injuries result in some permanent impairment. These numbers make it clear that how safely you live away from your workplace can mean the difference between life and death.

We are all very familiar with our home environment. Familiarity often leads to complacency, and this can lead to injuries and death. The best approach is to be proactive and manage safety aggressively in the home. Conducting a home "safety audit" will go a long way to making your home as safe as possible and put another piece of the safety and health puzzle in place. Things to look at are listed below.

GENERAL

- Install smoke detectors on each floor and change batteries each year.
- Make sure you have escape routes from the home (including two routes out).
- Keep drapes away from heaters and fireplaces.
- Have you chimney inspected annually and swept if required.
- Ensure that screens or guards are in front of fireplaces, wood stoves and open heaters.
- Keep portable heaters away from flammable materials and on a sturdy base to prevent tipping.
- Keep electrical and telephone cords from areas where they can be walked on.
- Keep electrical and telephone cords out from under furniture or carpeting.
- Check cords for exposed wiring and fraying.
- If you have small children, cover electrical outlets with safety caps.
- Ensure that stairways are well lit.
- Make sure railings are tight on stairways.
- Ensure that furniture have no sharp edges.

KITCHEN

- Make sure towels, curtains and other flammable items are located away from the stove.
- Have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and make sure the family knows how to use it.
- Keep extension cords and appliance cords away from sink and stove areas.
- Use the back burners of the stove and keep pot handles turned to the back of the stove.
- Keep handles on pots and pans tight.
- Store cleaning supplies in marked containers in secure storage away from children.
- If you have children, use safety devices to secure drawers, cabinets, appliances and trash cans.

BATHROOM

- Keep medicines & cleaning products in containers with safety caps and out of the reach of children.
- Properly dispose of all out-of-date medications.
- Store medications in original labeled containers.
- Have a well-stocked first-aid kit available.
- Place non-skid mats or stick-ons in the tub/shower floor.
- Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub or near any water.
- Check water temperature before placing a child in the tub.

BEDROOMS/PLAYROOMS

- Put infants to sleep on their backs in a crib with a firm, flat mattress.
- Keep cribs away from windows, window blinds, or curtain rods.
- Examine toys for sharp edges and remove small parts.
- Store children's toys on low, deep shelves or in a toy box that has no lid.
- Do not smoke in bed.
- Turn off heating pads before going to sleep.
- Do not tuck in sides or ends of electric blankets and do not cover with a bedspread.

(Continued on page 9)

High Fives

"Thanks [John Andrew] for writing such a clear and succinct article explaining 'The Last Paycheck' (Department of Labor & Industry News, Summer 2001*). I don't know why I had such a hard time keeping this straight, until I read your article. Aha! I then went to the 'Montana's Wage and Hour Labor Law Reference Guide' and now understand my blindness and I kept going into an indefinite loop where it lists an exception to exceptions. So now that I am clear, I know I can do a better job explaining it to others."*

— Patti Furniss, Bitterroot Job Service Workforce Center

Home Safety Audit

(Continued from page 8)

GARAGE/STORAGE/OUTDOORS

- Keep hazardous substances (lighter fluid, paint, thinner, antifreeze) in original containers.
- Label flammable materials and store in tightly capped, approved safety containers.
- Keep all hazardous and flammable materials out of reach of children away from heat or flame.
- Make sure tools and power equipment are out of the reach of children.
- Protect swimming pools from unauthorized entry with fence, gates and childproof locks.
- Don't let children go swimming or play in or around water without adult supervision.
- Install child safety seats/booster seats correctly in the back seat of automobiles & use properly.
- Anchor home playground equipment firmly in the ground.
- Install play equipment 6 feet from fences or buildings and on soft ground or lawn areas.

High Fives

"...I called the Helena phone center to help a claimant with her unemployment claims. The customer is hearing impaired, therefore, needed assistance in filing her initial claim. I spoke with Niel [Mullarkey] on both occasions. He was very helpful in filing her initial claim. Then the claimant returned to the Job Service office because she had not received her claim card in the mail and wasn't sure what she needed to do. I called the Helena phone center and spoke to Niel. Rather than the claimant having to make another trip to the local Job Service office for assistance, Niel was gracious to take the claimant's biweekly claim information. The claimant and I appreciated him taking the information on the phone rather than waiting for the claimant to receive her card and mail it back in, which he could have done. I also had an old BRI booklet and Niel mailed me copies of the new BRI booklet. I would like to express my appriecation for this outstanding customer service! Thanks Niel."

— June Littlefield, Lake County Job Service Workforce Center

"As you know, a member of my LAUS staff met with you and your staff recently to review your redesigned LAUS UI database. I would like to thank you for your time and hospitality during that trip. Please also convey my appreciation to Rachel Bawden of the UI Program Support Department. Her thorough documentation of the LAUS and MLS extracts made the review go very smoothly."

— John Gordon, Assistant Regional Commissioner,
U.S. Department of Labor

"All of you (the Board of Dentistry) are certainly deserving of a commendation by members of your professions as well as the people of Montana for your efforts. I must also say thank you to your most valued employee, Sharon [McCullough]. She made it so much easier initially and continued to do so throughout my tenure.

— Henry Stish, retired, Board of Dentistry

IAPES Members Shake Their Groove Things at Fall Educational Conference

- **Kelly Chapman**

70's-themed fun and education drew over fifty IAPES members from across the state to Helena on September 21 for the group's fall educational conference.

The festivities began Thursday evening with a groovy early bird party, complete with trivia, name that tune, costume, and pictionary contests, and of course, a very happenin' dance contest. Bob Simoneau proved he can still do a mean chair dance, leading his teammates Nancy Elliott, Dale Siegle, and Brenda Evans to the grand prize win of an authentic 8-track tape player and all the 8-track tapes they could ever need (or want).

Friday afternoon was filled with excellent speakers. Charlotte Fuson presented, "Glitches in Goals" and offered useful tips on moving past roadblocks that tend to crop up from time to time. Larry Sheldon from Qwest presented, "A Good Difference – A Look at Customer Service." Larry's presentation was very entertaining, and got everyone rethinking their customer interactions, particularly as they occur over the phone.

Homegrown talents Nancy Elliott and Dexter Wester wrapped up the afternoon by sharing information on the new and improved IAPES awards programs. Montana has had international winners in the past, and it was great to learn about all the new ways Montana's standouts will be recognized under the new program.

The Helena chapter hosted a barbecue Friday evening to bid farewell to our fellow IAPES members and close the conference.

IAPES dancing queens, Nancy Elliott (JMG) and Brenda Evans (Havre Job Service Workforce Center), check out their grand prize 8-track tapes.

MT Apprenticeship & Training Program: The Original 4-Year Degree

- **Lanae Vetsch**

In 1941 the Montana 27th Legislative Assembly enacted Chapter 149 to create an apprenticeship system. The program operated with informal federal recognition from 1941 until 1977. In 1977 federal regulations were finalized (Title 29,CFR 29.12). The United States Secretary of Labor officially recognized the authority of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry to determine individual apprenticeship program compliance for federal purposes. The year 2001 we celebrated our 60th anniversary.

Registered apprenticeship is on-the-job training supplemented with related technical instruction. Apprentices work under the supervision of qualified journeyworkers to develop the skill, learn the techniques, materials and equipment of the trade.

Currently we have 1,033 registered apprentices in 50 different occupations. Some occupations registered are: Automobile Mechanics, Bakers, Boilermakers, Butchers, Carpenters, Child Care Development Specialists, Electricians, Fire Fighters, Meat Cutters, Operating Engineers, Plumbers, Sheet Metal Workers and many more. We have six people working in our unit servicing our great state. Our field reps, Roy Symons, Gary Schoer, Lanae Vetsch, and Anne Carpenter travel an average of 2,000 miles per month. Our administrative assistant, Tom LeTellier is the glue of our program. He maintains the database and keeps all the files in order. No words can describe the marvelous job of our supervisor, Mark Maki, who manages the apprenticeship program.

Montana expended $380,000 to support apprenticeship training during fiscal year 2001. The program had 939 apprentices registered as of June 30, 2000. In fiscal year 2001 these apprentices earned average hourly wages of $14.19 per hour and average gross annual wages of $29,525.04. Employers contributed approximately $27,723,073.56 in gross wages to apprentices while the average apprentice contributed $5,538.00 in income taxes to the state's and federal economy. Furthermore, since 1997, 87% of all apprentices graduated from the program are still working in Montana.

Some special apprenticeship activity is the $350,000 grant from the USDOL for the Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship Program to enhance the child care industry. This grant is to increase the overall quality of early care and education on a statewide basis. We receive limited funding from the legislature to offset the related instruction cost for employers and to help with grants for the instructor cost for organized classroom teaching. We also implemented a technical grant through the North Dakota State College of Science for Internet enhancement with our related instruction coursework. We organize and participate in activities with the education community and take part in career days across the state. In 2001, we participated in apprenticeship rodeos for career fairs in Missoula, Butte, Billings and Havre. Apprenticeship rodeos provide supervised hands on experience with equipment in various trades with active apprenticeship sponsors.

Apprenticeship & Traning staff, from left to right: Supervisor Mark Maki; Field Reps Lanae Vetsch, Anne Carpenter, Gary Schoer, and Roy Symons; Administrative Assistant Tom LeTellier.

Governor's Annual Safety Award Winners

- **John Maloney**

Commissioner of Labor, Mike Foster, announced the winners of the 2001 Governor's Awards for Safety and Health. The Governor and the Department of Labor and Industry annually recognize employers who have made outstanding achievements in safety and for their personal contribution to the improving of safety and health in Montana workplaces. "These employers have demonstrated a personal commitment to safety," Foster said, "and have established initiatives in updating quality safety programs in their individual companies."

This year's winners were the Bozeman Public Library, the Montana Developmental Center in Boulder, the Deaconess Billings Clinic and Big Sky Coal Company in Colstrip. The awards were presented at the Governor's Conference on Safety and Workers' Compensation held at Big Sky September 26-28. Each award recipient received a plaque that was appropriately inscribed.

"The Governor's Awards are Montana's highest honors given to employers in both the public and private sectors for excellence in improving safety and health in the workplace," Commissioner Foster stated. They are designed to recognize the commitment made to ongoing safety programs, involvement of employees in the development of the in-house safety plan, and efforts made to enhance programs by seeking advice and assistance of qualified professionals at the state and federal level

Labor unions, trade associations and other entities annually nominate award winners. The nominees are independently evaluated and rated by a panel of safety professionals who follow an objective method of evaluating safety programs and records.

ERC Has a Busy Fall Season

- **Renee Wuertley**

Bonnie Thorvilson has retired from ERC but Karmel Duffy is replacing her as ERD's representative. Thank you Bonnie for all your hard work through the years and a big welcome to Karmel! We are still seeking representatives from the USF&G building, the old Shodair building, and from Business Standards Division at the Federal Building. Potential ERC members should talk to their supervisor about becoming a member, and after receiving approval, contact me at x2723.

This quarter the nominees for Employee of the Month (EOM) were very extensive. The recipients of the EOMs were Dennis Semprini, JoAnn Gleason, and Jeanne Murphy. The nominees we had to choose from included: Amyee Pulver, Lyle Gabrian, Bev Bilyeu-Carkeek, Robert Frost, and Monte Ebel from the Billings JSWC. From Helena we had Kim Capps, Carol Deegan, Pat Hyatt, and Jeanne Murphy all of UID, JoAnn Gleason of CSD, Leslie Duffy from FSB, and Barb Loehr of R&A. Nominees from other locations included Dennis Semprini of Bozeman JSWC, Deborah Derrick-Gass, and Paula Marcinkowski of Missoula JSWC, Ron Nemec of Miles City JSWC, and Tom Mohler of Flathead JSWC. Congratulations to all nominees and recipients!

The annual Root Beer Float Special was held in August. We hope you enjoyed the cool treats and are thankful for your generosity. In September we hosted a tour of the Capitol Building. Our guide from the Historical Society was very knowledgeable. The building looks awesome! Our Food Drive took place during the last week of September and first week of October. Most locations opted to build a "Food Structure". R&A was judged to have the winning structure, Montana's Capitol Building. They get to keep the "traveling trophy" another year. But the big winner was Helena Food Share who netted 731 pounds of food for distribution. Thanks to all who contributed. The Annual Book Swap was held on October 12 at the WSB and Beck Building.

Research and Analysis won the food collection & structure building contest for the second year in a row. A total of 731 lbs. of food was collected department-wide.

The Thanksgiving Silent Auction, Bake Sale, 50/50 Raffle and a new event, the "Turkey Shoot", are scheduled for November 15. November is our primary fundraising month for the year and your contributions will be greatly appreciated. Funds benefit a Christmas family in addition to employee(s) in need year round. Thanks to all DLI employees for your continuing support.

ERD Hosts Roundtable Discussion

- **John Weida**

The Employment Relations Division (ERD) has begun sponsoring a series of informal discussions about workers' compensation topics. Each Roundtable discussion focuses on a specific topic of particular interest to the workers compensation community. A panel of invited guests, usually around six, is asked to discuss the topic in an open, friendly, informal atmosphere. This format is very enlightening for audience members who watch the exchange and can then ask questions when the panel members have concluded their discussion.

The workers' compensation community has few, if any, forums that allow informal discussion. Often a concern must be raised to a formal status before dialogue is held or, as is often the case with legislative issues, the discussion is held under significant time pressures.

Through this Roundtable format, ERD hopes to provide the Montana's Workers' Compensation system with an alternative method of sharing information and reaching solutions.

The first roundtable, held on July 25, focused on two recent Workers' Compensation Court decisions, Stavenjord and Schmill, and their impact on occupational disease benefits. Roundtable participants were Dick Martin, Claimant Attorney, Great Falls, Judge Mike McCarter, Workers' Compensation Court Judge, Pam Egan, Disability Specialist, AFLCIO, Senator Vicki Cocchiarella, Missoula, and Tom Martello, Attorney, State Fund. It was an excellent discussion and both participants and observers felt it was very worthwhile.

The next roundtable, Information Sharing: Documentation, Exchanging Information, and Negotiating, will be held November 5, 2001, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Westcoast Colonial Hotel in Helena.

The ***Montana Department of Labor and Industry's News*** is published quarterly for the department's employees.

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Carol Larkin , Centralized Services Division

Wade Wilkison & Marla Yager, Employment Relations Division

Contact Kelly at 444-1520, if you have comments on this issue. We will accept your stories and photos at anytime. Your input is valued, and we hope to hear from you soon!

Personnel Changes

July 01 - October 1

LEAVING DLI during this period were:
Jolene Dennehy. Butte JS
Robin Christofferson, Great Falls JS
Mark VanAlstyne, CSD, Technical Services Bureau
Gary Pfister, Missoula JS
Sarah Hogan,Libby JS
S. Snowberg-Hunt, Kalispell JS
Jeff Harrison, CSD, Fiscal Support
Tanya Fiske, BSD, Health Care Licensing Bureau
Marcella Buster, Billings JS
Jim Morgan, Bozeman JS
Cynthia Boies, Missoula JS
Rene Adams ,Polson JS
James Blake, BSD, Building Codes Retired
Sally Tilleman, Lewistown JS
Dawn Shakespeare, Thompson Falls JS
Beverly Marlow, Office of Legal Services
Bruce Zinne, Missoula JS
Ann Boland, UI Phone Center
Tonya Cambridge, UI Phone Center
Jennifer Bredeson, Missoula JS
Bill Connor Jr, ERD, WC Regulation

NEW EMPLOYEES in Permanent Positions:
Barbara Arnold, Missoula JS
Robert Duffy, BSD. Building Codes
Grant Ellison,Butte JS
Joseph Lindsay, BSD,Building Codes
Gregory Mullins, Missoula JS
Beverly Ragsdale-Aguirre, Missoula JS
Robert Tull, BSD, Building Codes
Lori Wade, Missoula JS
Scott Wilson, Office of Legal Services
Holly Dean, Sidney JS
Frank Hayes Jr., ERD, Safety Bureau
Sally Russell, Mssoula JS
Sonja Box-Mackey, ERD, WC Claims Assistance
Troy Robertson, BSD, Business & Occupational Licensing
Josh Cannon, BSD, Building Codes
Andy Mierek, CSD, Fiscal Support/Mail
Dwain Wood, BSD, Health Care Licensing
Polly Boyer, Commissioner's Office, Personnel & Training
David Fenchak, Anaconda JS
Rebecca Holman, Missoula JS
Teresa Johnson-Sturtz, Dillon JS
Vicki Knudsen, ERD,Labor Standards
Richard Madsen, Missoula JS
Bonnie Burks, Billings JS
A. Pete Darancette, BSD, Building Codes
Richard Larson, BSD,Building Codes

TRANSFER:
Mary Behr, fr Wolf Point JS to Missoula JS

NAME CHANGE
ERD Theresa McNurlin (from Peterson)

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